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DETROIT BUREAU OF
GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH, INC.
100 GRISWOLD STREET

Report

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MEMORANDA
SUBMITTED TO THE
DETROIT CHARTER COMMISSION

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Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research

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MEMORANDA SUBMITTED TO THE

DETROIT CHARTER COMMISSION.

Memoranda re Organization

Departmental Organization

Departmental Activities

Budget Procedure

Department of Purchases and Supplies

Civil Service

Markets

Police Deputies

Police Trials

Civil Service Selections and Discharge

Public Hearings on Budget

Financing of House of Correction

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GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH, INC.
100 GRISWOLD STREET
TEL. MAIN 1977

THE DETROIT BUREAU OF GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH IS ORGANIZED WITH A TWO FOLD PURPOSE:—

1. TO GET THINGS DONE FOR DETROIT THROUGH CO-OPERATION WITH PERSONS WHO ARE IN OFFICE, BY INCREASING EFFICIENCY AND ELIMINATING WASTE, AND

2. TO SERVE AS AN INDEPENDENT, NON-PARTISAN AGENCY FOR KEEPING CITIZENS INFORMED ABOUT THE CITY'S BUSINESS.

MEMORANDUM RE DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION

To the Charter Commission of Detroit:

The Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research presents for the consideration of your honorable body, certain suggestions relating to a proposed departmental organization for the City of Detroit:

Irrespective of all other questions which must be decided by the Charter Commission, it will no doubt be necessary for this body to determine and present to the public a re-distribution of the activities of the City of Detroit in such a manner as will insure their most effective operation.

In this connection two propositions are undoubtedly before the Charter Commission:

(1) Will the administration of the several city departments be directed by appointed boards as is the case at present in a majority of instances, or will the city departments be operated by single commissioners responsible directly to the power from which they receive their appointment.

(2) Will the distribution of city activities be continued in a number of departments as is the present case, or will these activities be centralized in a limited number of large departments.

As regards the first of these propositions, the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research believes that the best practice of American municipalities distinctly

condemns the idea of non-partisan or bi-partisan boards administering city departments, for these reasons:

(a) It is difficult to secure cooperation between quasi-independent boards, and close cooperation is absolutely necessary for the successful conduct of the activities of a large city.

(b) It is practically impossible to obtain rapid decisions on the part of a board on executive matters, and such decisions are essential to proper administration.

(c) With quasi-independent boards it is frequently impossible for the mayor to harmonize his own program of operation with the ideas of the individual members. In other words, there is a de-centralization of authority which cannot be explained away by the fact that these boards can be dismissed and re-appointed by the mayor.

(d) The fact that prominent citizens constitute a board for the direction of departments detracts public attention from the executive officer who is actually responsible for administrative work. The result is frequently a less effective man as administrative officer than would otherwise be secured.

Presumably the idea of quasi-independent boards was instituted in American government in order to remove certain important departments from political manipulation. This was particularly true of the departments of health, water, police and fire. There is no doubt that such boards served a very useful purpose during a particular period of American municipal history. However, it is generally conceded that political manipulation is becoming less prominent in municipal affairs, and with the inauguration

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of non-partisan elections, plus a demand by the public for effective administration, it is believed that the advantages gained from continuing such boards are more than off-set by the disadvantages inherent in them.

In this connection it is suggested that certain legislative powers now exercised by several boards be reverted to the City Council.

On the second subject of a combination of kindred departments as opposed to the maintaining of a larger number of independent departments, it is realized that there is diversity of opinion. Many students of government believe that there are advantages to be gained by centralizing, say for example, all of the city activities dealing with charities, correction, health, recreation, parks, etc. into a department of public welfare. Similarly, they recommend the combination of all activities relating to public utilities such as water and lighting, into a department of public utilities. In the same way all activities relating to public works would be combined into a department of public works, etc., etc. Under this plan city activities naturally group themselves into five or six departments.

On the other hand, other persons familiar with the operation of municipal government believe there are larger advantages to be secured by maintaining the component departments as independent units responsible directly to the executive officers of the city.

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On the other hand, other persons familiar with the operation of municipal government believe there are larger advantages to be secured by maintaining the component departments as independent units responsible directly to the executive officers of the city.

It is believed by the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research that this latter position is sound, because the combination of important activities into a few departments sacrifices responsibility for the operation of these activities in order to secure centralization. The value of centralization is to fix responsibility. However, centralization can be carried so far that responsibility is really hidden and the ends sought are lost. It is suggested that there is a happy medium between too great a centralization of authority and too diversified a distribution of authority. For example, the combination of health, recreation, correction, charities and parks into a department of public welfare might easily mean that responsibility for the very important health functions of the municipality would be lost if there were any occasion for the commissioner of public welfare and the director of health to have a difference of opinion concerning the control of epidemics or other health measures.

If centralization of authority can be secured by the appointment of six commissioners it might as well be secured by the appointment of three commissioners to control the city activities, and possibly only by one who would be directly responsible to the Mayor. The factor determining the number of divisions to the city government should be the capacity of a group of experienced officers to deal with the small and large problems of

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If centralization of authority can be secured by the appointment of six commissioners it might as well be secured by the appointment of three commissioners to control the city activities, and possibly only by one who would be directly responsible to the Mayor. The factor determining the number of divisions to the city govern-

their respective departments and those of the entire city. The practical answer is, that the Mayor who is responsible for the operation of the city departments can secure a better working knowledge of the departments from twelve or fifteen department heads in the intimate touch with the work in each of their activities than from five or six department heads who must necessarily have only a general knowledge of the activities within their departments.

Along this same line of thought, the director of an important activity would find it impossible, with too great centralization, to carry his program to the Mayor and to the public without being insubordinate to his commissioner.

For these reasons, it is suggested to the Charter Commission that consideration be given to the feasibility of combining the city's activities into perhaps twelve or fifteen departments, the head of each to constitute a member of the Mayor's cabinet. It is believed that this degree of centralization will permit the Mayor, the legislative body and the people to determine exactly the responsibility for the operation of the principal activities of the city, and it is further believed that such responsibility could not be determined if these dozen or fifteen departments were arbitrarily combined into a smaller number.

Therefore, it is suggested to your Honorable Body that consideration be given to the creation of at least the following departments, the administrative heads of which are to be appointed by and to be subordinate to the executive officer of the city; such appointments to be unconfirmed, and to be for an indefinite term.

(a) A Department of Public Works.

(b) A Department of Health.

(c) A Department of Fire.

(d) A Department of Police.

(e) A Department of Public Lighting.

(f) A Department of Water.

(g) A Department of Parks and Boulevards.

(h) A Department of Correction.

(i) A Department of Assessing.

(j) A Department of the Treasury.

(k) A Department of Recreation.

(l) A Department of Purchasing.

(m) A Department of Charities or Welfare.

(n) A Department of Law.

(o) A Department of Buildings.

It is further suggested that the power be reserved to the City Council to increase the number of departments and re-distribute city activities among such departments wherever such action is desirable to facilitate the operation of the city. It may seem inconsistent for a charter

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to enumerate a part of the city's departmental organization and then provide that this organization may be modified by a legislative action. However, it is believed to be most practical to outline the fundamental organization of the city in order not to interfere with its operation. In addition the enumeration of the fundamental departments in the city will permit the outlining of the powers of these departments, which might otherwise be difficult.

It is further suggested that the city controller be appointed directly by the City Council in order that this office may more effectively serve as a check upon the expenditures of other public departments, and may from an uninfluenced position say to the legislative body whether or not the operating departments are being conducted in accordance with the official financial program approved by such body.

If the office of city clerk is to exercise those activities normally belonging to this position, namely, to act as administrative officer for the legislative body, it is believed that this position should be appointive. However, if it is determined that the city clerk will exercise discretionary powers such as are incumbent upon a member of the election commission or of a Board of Estimates, etc. it is recommended that this position be elective. Through gradual growth the office of city clerk in the City of Detroit has acquired a number duties which in

volve the determination of policy. Ordinarily, the duties of city clerk as exercised by such officers in most municipalities, are purely of an administrative character. On this point the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research wishes to withhold recommendation until the personnel of the election commission, the possibility of the creation of a Board of Estimates, etc., and the specific discretionary powers of the city clerk are determined.

Also no suggestions are made at this time as to elective offices, including the mayor, city council, recorder's court judges, police court judges, board of education and constables, or as to the administration of the duties now exercised by the City Plan and Improvement Commission, Sinking Fund Commission, Fire Department, Retirement and Pension Fund Board, the Board of Estimates, the Civil Service Commission, the Election Commission, the Police Pension Fund Board, the Library Commission, Superannuated Police Fund Board, Trustees of the School of Design, Board of Gas Commissioners, Board of Street Railway Commissioners, Board of Boiler Rules, and Board of Rules for Inflammable Liquids.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lent D. Upson,

Director.

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Also no suggestions are made at this time as to duties and constables, or as to the administration of the duties now exercised by the City Plan and Improvement Department and Pension Fund Board, the Board of Estimates, the Civil Service Commission, the Election Commission, the

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MEMORANDUM RE DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

To the Charter Commission of Detroit:

Irrespective of whether the departments of the City of Detroit are administered by boards or by single commissioners, certain re-distribution of activities may seem desirable to secure more effective operation.

In this connection the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research urges consideration of the following suggestions:

1. That the activities of the present Poor Commission having to do with clinics, ambulances, and hospitals be transferred to the Board of Health. It is believed that these activities pertaining to public health should not be operated separately from the clinical and hospital service of the Board of Health.

2. That there be created a distinct department, to be practically self-sustaining, and to administer the following:

   a - Those activities now performed by the Department of Safety Engineering, including smoke inspection.

   b - Those activities now performed by the Department of Buildings.

   c - Those activities now performed by the wiring inspection division of the Public Lighting Commission, if such transfer is legal.

   d - Those activities relating to the construction or alteration of buildings now performed by the housing division of the Board of Health.

   e - Those activities now performed by the plumbing inspection division of the Board of Health.

f. Those activities relating to the examination and certification of plumbers now performed by the Board of Health.

It is believed that such a combination would afford relief to those requiring permits for building construction; would relieve the Board of Health of activities not intimately related to public health; and would centralize responsibility for the enforcement of legislation relating to building.

3. That the activities of the Department of Police relating to the issuing of licenses be transferred to the City Controller.

4. That the office of the Secretary to the Department of Police be discontinued as such; and that the Commissioner of Police be authorized to appoint such deputy commissioners as may be necessary, and determine their duties.

5. That there be delegated to the division of food inspection of the Board of Health the activities of the Department of Police relating to weights and measures and city scales, and of the Department of Public Works relating to markets. Undoubtedly, arrangements would be continued by which the Department of Public Works would repair and maintain the present market house. Such centralization in the Board of Health would be the beginning of a positive program for improved food distribution and control.

6. That there be created a department of central purchasing and stores authorized to buy, store, and distribute in a businesslike way all supplies, materials, equipment, and certain contractual services used by all of the departments, offices, commissions, and institutions of the City of Detroit. Such department also to sell all property to be disposed of by the City, to be appropriated a sufficient rotary stores fund, to maintain adequate warehouses and store yards, and to inspect all purchases to be acquired upon standard specifications.

7. That there be created as a part of a department of central purchasing and stores, a testing laboratory fully equipped to make physical and chemical tests of all supplies, materials equipment purchased by the City.

4. That the offices of the Secretary to the Department of Police be discontinued as such; and that the Commissioner of Police be authorized to appoint such deputy commissioners as may be necessary to determine their duties.

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It is probable that certain of these suggestions could not become operative under the state statutes. It is therefore recommended that in those instances Council be given power to make the change when the state law will permit.

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MEMORANDUM RE BUDGET PROCEDURE

To the Charter Commission of Detroit:

Probably the most important piece of legislation which will be annually considered by the City Council under the new charter will be that making appropriations for the operation, maintenance, and construction of the city departments. If this appropriation ordinance is to be given deserved consideration, two essential features are necessary:

1. It should be prepared by the Mayor and his immediate subordinates before submission to the legislative body, in order that it may represent a well considered program such as the executive wishes to bring before the public.

2. It should be reviewed by the legislative body in such a way that the best needs of the community are expressed rather than the needs of individuals or sections.

To accomplish these ends it is necessary in a way to reverse the present statutory budget procedure of the City of Detroit. At the present time, according to the charter, the budget is transmitted by the controller to the City Council without the express approval of the mayor. In this way, the budget does not represent the executive's program. The budget is then considered by a number of committees in the legislative body and their results sent to the mayor and his cabinet (the Board of Estimates), for their approval or disapproval.

The Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research suggests that consideration be given in the new charter of a budget procedure by which:

1. Departmental estimates will be consolidated and revised by the mayor and his advisors into a budget which will represent the mayor's ideas of a city program for a complete fiscal year.

2. That this budget be accompanied when transmitted to the City Council by a statement from the executive officer indicating his reasons for supporting the recommended appropriations and outlining the construction programs which are of more than a single year's duration.

3. That this budget be considered by the City Council as a Committee of the Whole which shall have power to increase, decrease, add, and deduct items.

4. That the appropriation ordinance as passed by the Common Council shall be subject to veto by the mayor as to items only.

5. That sufficient time shall elapse between the presentation of the budget by the mayor to the Council and its final consideration by the Council that adequate public discussion of the budget may be had.

6. That consideration by the City Council of the budget be open to the public and that definite opportunity be given the public to appear in support or protest of the budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Lent D. Upson,

Director.

MEMO RE DEPARTMENT OF PURCHASES AND SUPPLIES

Tentative

The Commissioner of Purchases and supplies shall, in manner provided by ordinance, purchase all supplies, materials and equipment for all departments, offices, boards, courts, commissions and institutions; sell all real and personal property of the city not needed or unsuitable for public use or that may have been condemned as useless by the various departments, offices, boards, courts, commissions and institutions; have charge of such store rooms and store houses of the city in which shall be stored all supplies and materials purchased by the city and delivered directly to the various departments, offices, boards, commissions and institutions.

The Commissioner of Purchases and Supplies shall inspect, or cause to be inspected, all supplies delivered to determine conformance to specifications of quality and quantity of deliveries, and no voucher shall be honored unless the accompanying invoice shall be endorsed as approved by the Commissioner of Purchases and Supplies.

There shall be provided a revolving fund to be used by the Commissioner of Purchases and Supplies, the amount to be determined by the Common Council, for the purpose of purchasing articles used by the several departments in large quantities and in anticipation of their needs.

The Commissioner of Purchases shall not furnish any supplies, materials or equipment, nor purchase any supplies, materials or equipment for any department, office, board, commission and institution unless there be to the credit of such department an available appropriation balance in excess of all unpaid obligations sufficient to pay for such supplies.

Upon certification that funds are available in the proper appropriations, such goods shall be purchased and shall be paid for from funds of the proper departments for that purchase. However, such goods as have been bought and paid for out of the stores account and furnished the several departments on requisition shall be paid for by the department furnished therewith by warrant or by transfer of funds made payable to the credit of the stores account.

Before making any purchase of over dollars or sale of over dollars the Commissioner of Purchases shall give opportunity for competition, all proposals to be upon precise specifications and under such rules and regulations

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made payable to the credit of the stores account.

Before making any purchase of over dollars or sale
of over dollars the Commissioner of Purchases shall
give opportunity for competition, all proposals to be open

as the Council shall establish.

The Commissioner of Purchases and Supplies shall also purchase for all departments, offices, boards, courts, commissions and institutions such contractual services as may be determined by ordinance.

MEMO RE CIVIL SERVICE

January 17, 1918.

Mr. Paul H. King,
160 Taylor Avenue,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. King:

In connection with our conversation last night concerning the civil service sections of the proposed charter for Detroit, I am taking the liberty of calling your attention to the salient differences on this point between the present and proposed charter and the recommendations of the National Civil Service Reform Association.

Regarding the dismissal of employees, the present charter, Section 12, says that in case of dismissal, "The Commission may, and upon the written request of the said subordinate made within ten days, shall investigate, and if it shall find as the result of such investigation that the discharge, reduction or suspension to have been made for political or other reasons than the good of the service, it shall so report to the appointing officer, and the party so discharged, reduced or suspended shall thereupon be entitled to resume his position and to receive compensation for the time lost".

A parallel section from the Model Charter prepared by the National Municipal League, and endorsed by the National Civil Service Reform Association, reads as follows: "Any officer or employee in the classified service may be removed, suspended, laid off or reduced in grade by.. .....the head of the department in which he is employed, for any cause which will promote the efficiency of the service; but he must first be furnished with a written statement of the reasons therefor, and be allowed a reasonable time for answering such reasons in writing, which answer.....shall be made a part of the records of the board..... . No trial or examination of witnesses shall be required in such case except in the discretion of the officer making the removal".

The first section quoted means that to dismiss a public employee it is usually necessary for the department head to prove his case before the civil service commission sitting as judges, and at which time the dismissed employee is represented by attorney. The result is dis-

Mr. Paul H. Kime,
1o5 Taylor Avenue,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. Kime:

In connection with our conversation over long distance telephone regarding the civil service status of the proposed charter for Detroit, I am taking the liberty of calling your attention to the salient differences on this point between the present and proposed charters and the reasons advanced by the National Civil Service Advisory Board regarding the dismissal of employees, the "removal provision", Section 12, says that in case of discharge, "the commission may, and upon the written request of the said employee made within ten days, shall investigate, and if it shall find as the result of such investigation that the discharge, reduction or suspension is based upon political or other reasons that the good of the service, it shall so report to the appointing officer, and the party so discharged, reduced or suspended shall thereupon be entitled to resume his position and to receive compensation for the time lost".

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The first section quoted means that to dismiss a public employee it is merely necessary for the department head to prove his case before the civil service commission, and as decided by the Supreme Court in [illegible] employee is represented by attorney. The result is dis-

missal for only the most flagrant conduct. Inefficient employees are retained because it is almost impossible to give definite proof of inefficiency.

Dismissal without trial, as is contemplated in the second section quoted, is entirely in line with the real idea of civil service, - i. e., that civil service is primarily to protect the city against inefficient service rather than to protect employees against dismissal.

Complaints against civil service are quote common and usually concern themselves with the fact that incompetents find it easy to get into office and easy to stay there. Such a situation arises either because there is a bad civil service law or because a good law is badly administered.

Personally, I hope the Charter Commission will see its way clear to make this suggested change in their tentative draft of the civil service section, and I am endeavoring to get some supporting evidence from other cities on this subject.

Sincerely yours,

Lent D. Upson,

Director.

ldu k

MEMO RE MARKETS

The Welfare Commission shall have power to erect or acquire and operate such storage warehouses, supply depots, market buildings and places, for rental only, and to enforce such regulations to govern the use of such buildings and places and the sale or storage of merchandise therein as may be approved by the Common Council.

The Commission is empowered to investigate questions of supply and demand, transportation, and distribution of all food products, and all questions pertaining thereto and to make recommendation to Common Council. The Commission shall have power to conduct educational campaigns to promote more general use of markets by the public and to secure a more economical distribution of food products.

MEMO RE POLICE DEPUTIES

It is recommended:

That there be two deputy commissioners in the Police Department, to serve indefinitely and to be removed only for incompetency or malfeasance of office:

That the duties be divided and assigned as follows:

(1) One deputy to be in charge of actual police work, supervision and direction of the force.

It is suggested that this man be trained in the science of policing and that he be picked from the members of the force for his executive ability, knowledge of policing, knowledge of criminal law.

It is suggested that a man with not less than fifteen years' experience on the force be chosen for this position.

(2) One other deputy be placed in charge of police records, purchasing, and accounts, of the Police Department; that it be his function to record and collect such information which it is essential that a commissioner have to successfully suppress and prevent crime.

The suggested division of duties is based upon the employment of only two deputy commissioners. Should there be more deputies, the duties concerned with the direct supervision of the forces can be subdivided among such additional deputies; for example, one deputy may have under his jurisdiction the Detective Bureau exclusively.

MEMO RE POLICE DEPUTIES

It is recommended:

That there be two deputy commissioners in the Police Department, to serve indefinitely and to be removed only for incompetency or malfeasance in office:

That the duties be divided and assigned as follows:

(1) One deputy to be in charge of general police work, supervision and direction of the forces.

It is suggested that this man be trained in the science of policing and that he be picked from the members of the force for his executive ability, knowledge of policing, knowledge of criminal law.

It is suggested that a man with not less than fifteen years' experience on the force be chosen for this position.

(2) One other deputy be placed in charge of police records, purchasing, and accounts of the Police Department; but it be his function to record and collect such information which it is necessary the commissioner have to successfully suppress and prevent crime.

The suggested division of duties is based upon

there be more deputies, the duties concerned with the direct supervision of the forces can be subdivided among such additional deputies. The records and property

MEMO RE POLICE TRIALS

The Police Trial Board as provided by the Charter Commission, February 6, is to consist of a superintendent oi police, chief of detectives, and the captain from a precinct other than that from which the defendant is located.

It should be indicated to the Commission that the title "captain" is applied only to a few individuals in the Police Department, such as the captain of the Detention Home, captain in the mayor's office, captain in charge of the mounted squad, etc.

To keep the spirit of this section, it should be changed to read "inspector in charge of precincts" rather than captain.

It is further suggested that since the captain of detectives is unusually busy, and since 95 per cent of the cases tried are uniformed men, that in his place be substituted the chief of the uniformed force or an additional inspector.

If this is not satisfactory, provision should be made by which the captain of detectives may delegate his duties to an inspector of detectives.

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2. TO SERVE AS AN INDEPENDENT, NON-PARTISAN AGENCY FOR KEEPING CITIZENS INFORMED ABOUT THE CITY'S BUSINESS.

MEMO RE CIVIL SERVICE SELECTIONS AND DISCHARGE

January 28, 1918.

Mr. Paul H. King,
110 West Fort Street,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. King:

In accordance with your informal request of recent date, we have examined all of the city charters which are available in the local library and our own library as to the provision for employment and discharge within the classified service.

The list of cities is as follows:

New York	Without	3 Highest
Chicago	With	Highest
Cleveland	Without	3 Highest
Detroit	With	Highest
San Francisco	With	Highest
Denver	Without	3 Highest
St. Paul	No data	3 Highest
Minneapolis	With	Highest
Toledo	Without	3 Highest
Columbus	Without	3 Highest
Dayton	Without	Entire list
Norfolk, Va.	Without	5 Highest
Kalamazoo	Without	3 Highest
Tiffin, Ohio	Without	Entire list
Tacoma	With	3 Highest
Grand Rapids	Without	3 Highest
Portland, Ore.	With	3 Highest
St. Louis	Without	3 Highest
New Haven	Without	3 Highest

You will note that of eighteen cities, six permit a discharged employee to appeal to the Civil Service Board, while six do not.

Of nineteen cities, four require the appointment of the highest on the list, thirteen permit appointment from the three highest, and two permit appointment from the entire list.

By telegram the National Civil Service Reform League suggests alternate sections: 1. Grant employes a statement of reasons for dismissal and opportunity to make an ex-

planation, the decision of the department head to be final. 2. Permit the department head to file charges against the employe before the Civil Service Commission if he so desires; this commission then to make an independent investigation.

All members of the National Civil Service Reform League are absolutely opposed to a review of the decision of the head of the department by either the Civil Service Commission or by the courts.

No data was available as to payment of salaries.

Very truly yours,

Lent D. Upson,

LDU:K

Director.

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MEMO RE PUBLIC HEARINGS ON BUDGET

January 30, 1918.

Mr. Paul H. King,
110 W. Fort Street,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. King:

May I venture to suggest for your consideration the possibility of permitting a public hearing somewhere in the process of preparing the city budget. A number of cities, including New York, allow the public to be heard at certain periods during the preparation of the budget. Sometimes this opportunity is taken large advantage of by citizens who are interested in increasing or decreasing appropriations for certain activities. At other times, only the representatives of citizen organizations appear to express their opinion regarding budget allowances. On the whole, however, it has had the wholesome effect of stimulating a public interest in budget making and creating an impression with the legislative body that they are primarily responsible to the public for what they do.

I doubt if such a provision would meet with opposition from any group.

Sincerely yours,

L. D. Upson,

LDU : K

Director.

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MEMO RE FINANCING OF HOUSE OF CORRECTION

Mr. Paul H. King,
110 W. Fort Street,
Detroit, Michigan.

My dear Mr. King:

In accordance with your request, Mr. Henry Steffens, the Bureau accountant, and myself have gone over the financial relations of the House of Correction to the City Government, and believe that the following suggestions, if incorporated in the new charter, would successfully meet the requirements of the institution:

1. That all moneys, except money taken from prisoners, be turned in to the city treasury.

2. That annually at the proper date the House of Correction submit an estimate for their needs for the coming fiscal year to the mayor, which, after proper approval by the Board of Estimates, etc., would be the basis for controlling the expenditures of the House of Correction.

3. That, until council shall decide to the contrary, the House of Correction shall be exempted from the operation of the purchasing department of the City of Detroit and shall be allowed, through their own officers, to purchase all supplies, material, and equipment required for its proper operation.

4. That provision shall be made by the Common Council for a rotary fund of sufficient amount to properly care for immediate needs.

5. That semi-monthly or monthly the House of Correction authority shall submit, in such form as council may require, a financial statement of expenditures made from this rotary fund, which, after approval by the Common Council, shall be the authority for the controller to draw a warrant against

the city treasurer, reimbursing this rotary fund.

6. That aside from supplies, material and equipment, accounts against the House of Correction shall be paid as is customary in other city departments and shall not be paid from such rotary fund.

7. That the controller shall maintain an accounting control over the operations of the House of Correction in the same manner as is required for other city departments.

You will note that we have exempted cash taken from prisoners from being turned into the city treasury. Is it not proper to raise the question as to whether these funds may be utilized by the city treasurer or even by the House of Correction authorities? This money, including any personal property which may be removed from the prisoner, is entirely the property of the prisoner. It would seem ethical that all such property should be placed in an envelope, a receipt given to the prisoner and upon his release this envelope be given to the prisoner intact. It might be said that a small amount of interest would be lost in this fashion, but if any such interest is earned, it would seem to be properly the property of the prisoner rather than of the city government.

It might be well to suggest at this time that provision for a similiar rotary fund be made to the present Poor Commission in order that they might care for immediate and pressing needs of poor families without going through the procedure now required for getting money from

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MEMO RE BUILDING INSPECTION AND SAFETY ENGINEERING

January 22, 1918.

Mr. Eugene S. Clarkson,
11 Buhl Block,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. Clarkson,

Apropos our conversation yesterday re the delegation of plumbing inspection to a Department of Buildings and Safety Engineering, I have again read over Section 7 of the Plumbing and Drainage Code and talked with Dr. Henry Vaughn of the Health Department.

This section of the code states that the plumbing inspectors shall be appointed by the Board of Health and shall periodically report to the Board of Heal th. Dr. Vaughn concurred in my impression that this does not specifically require that the physical inspection of plumbing shall be performed by the Health Department. In other words, it would be competent for the Charter Commission, as per the fourth paragraph of my letter of January 18th to Mr. Watson, to delegate this physical inspection to a Department of Buildings and Safety Engineering. However, Dr.Vaughn suggested that in order to avoid any possible difficulties, it might be well to say in the charter, that with the consent of the Board of Health, such duties should be performed by the Building Department.

Sincerely yours,

Lent D. Upson,

Director.

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MEMO RE PLUMBING AND HOUSING INSPECTION

January 18, 1918.

Mr. Richard M. Watson,
754 Maybury Grand Ave.,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. Watson:

At the recent meeting of the Committee on Public Works of the Charter Commission, the question was raised as to how far it would be possible to combine the activities of housing permits, plumbing inspection and examination of plumbers with a single department of Buildings and Safety Engineering.

I have spoken several times to Dr. J. W. Inches and Dr. Henry Vaughn of the Board of Health on this subject, Following is the gist of the discussion.

Act 167, Public Acts of 1917, distinctly places the administration of the housing code with the Department of Health. Any correlation of this work with safety engineering and buildings would have to be done by mutual arrangement as it is at present.

Act 222, Public Acts of 1901, provides for plumbing inspection, but does not indicate the department by which this activity shall be carried on. It would therefore be competent for the Charter Commission to specify that plumbing inspection should be done by a building and safety engineering department.

Act 222, Public Acts of 1901, states that the inspection of plumbers shall be done by an examining board appointed by the Board of Health. Therefore it would not be competent for the Charter Commission to corporate this duty with the duties of the suggested new department. However, the present health officer would be inclined to appoint the superintendent of any such newly created department as a member of the Board of Plumbing Examiners, and by agreement these examinations could be given by this newly created department rather than by the Board of Health as at present.

Sincerely yours,

Lent D. Upson,

Director.

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MEMO RE REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS

January 19, 1918.

Mr. Paul H. King,
110 W. Fort Street,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. King:

By talking with some members of the Charter Commission and by reading certain sections which have been approved, I have gathered the impression that it is the intention of the Commission that all moneys accruing to the city government shall be paid into the city treasury and shall be disbursed only by appropriation of the city council. In other words, the funds now received by the House of Correction and the Water Department would be paid directly to the treasury and these departments would annually submit a budget to the council, which after approval would govern their expenditures. I personally believe that such provision is most desirable as a means of securing control over all city funds, and doubt if any sound reason could be advanced as to why water taxes should be exempt from control while land taxes are not.

However, at Friday's meeting there seemed to be some confusion on this subject. A number of members spoke of the House of Correction, as if it would spend its own funds without authority from the city council. I talked with Mr. Callender regarding this, and he suggested my presenting the matter to you as chairman of the Committee on Phraseology.

Sincerely,

Lent D. Upsnn,

Director.

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MEMO RE SECRETARIES UNDER CIVIL SERVICE

January 19, 1918.

Mr. Paul H. King,
110 W. Fort Street,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. King:

In your capacity as chairman of the Committee on Arrangement and Phraseology, may I venture to suggest the advantages which might come from a slight change in the several references relating to secretaries of the departments or boards.

Present proposals continue the practice of the old charter, by which the several city boards are empowered to appoint a chief executive for each board and a secretary. In some instances the secretary acts as the executive. For example, in the fire commission and the poor commission. In others, as in the building department and the health department, the secretary is on an equal basis with the executive officer, both holding appointment from the board. In consequence, the secretary, whose real job is taking care of the business and clerical procedure of the department, is independent of orders from the executive. The friction which results may be easily imagined, and I am told that there is hardly a commission in the city which has escaped this situation at some time in its career.

Would it be feasible to provide that each commission should appoint an executive officer who would have entire supervision over the activities of that department and who would be responsible for their proper conduct. Such other employees as are necessary might also be authorized, but in each instance they could be made subordinate to this executive officer.

Sincerely,

Lent D. Upson,

Director.

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Memorandum Re the Procedure for the Payment of Claims and Accounts against the City of Detroit.

To the Charter Commission of Detroit:

In accordance with proposal No. 9 submitted to the Charter Commission, it is noted that under the administrative powers in the City Council, provision is made "To audit and allow all claims and accounts chargeable against the city". This procedure is in substantial accord with that now followed in the City of Detroit.

Under the present plan the following steps are necessary for the payment of claims against the City, other than damages or personal injury settlements:

1. Authorization to spend money must be issued by the Common Council and the Board of Estimates prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

2. Purchases must be made chargeable to these appropriations with the approval of the department heads.

3. Invoices covering the cost of the goods, wares or merchandise must be submitted to the department heads for acceptance.

4. An affadavit reading in part that the vendor agrees that the articles mentioned above have been delivered, etc., etc., must be affixed to the invoice by the vendor.

5. The department heads must approve of the invoices as to the receipt of the goods for quality, cost and extensions.

6. The city controller must add his approval after having audited the invoice as to the delivery of the goods, prices, and calculations appearing upon its face.

7. These claims must then be submitted by the controller to the Committee on Ways and Means of the Common Council, which meets on the morning of the day of the Council meeting, for its approval.

8. The Committee on Ways and Means must then submit its report of approval or disapproval of the item for payment to the Common Council at its regular session that evening for the approval of that body.

9. After approval by the Common Council these claims must then be submitted to the mayor for his approval.

10. These claims must then be paid by the city treasurer after a sufficient number of days have elapsed in which a reconsideration might be effected.

11. A list of these items giving the vendor and the amount involved, must be published in the proceedings of the Common Council.

12. The payment of an invoice after it is reported by the department head requires, on an average, from twenty to thirty days for its payment.

The Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research believes that this method of paying claims, other than personal injury settlements and damages, is unnecessarily cumbersome and expensive, and should be simplified. It is known that expenditures aggregating one hundred thousand dollars have been approved of by the committee, with but one member of the committee present, a majority or all of the other members signing the report the evening of the Council meeting. When it is realized that hundreds of payments are submitted for approval at each meeting of the Council, it is apparent that

12. [illegible] a vote either in person, or by proxy [illegible]

a body whose functions primarily are legislative cannot be intelligently conversant with the purposes for which the money authorized has been pledged. This is so because such action requires intimate knowledge of the workings of all departments incurring such liabilities and a complete history of the expenditure itself.

We are informed that no claim has been withheld for payment by action of any member of the Council. Practically, the Committee on Ways and Means of the City Council must rely upon the advice of the city controller in the matter of the payment of claims presented against the city. The procedure of the Council is merely perfunctory.

However, in the case of personal injury claims, the amount to be paid must be established by the Common Council.

The Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research therefore believes the final approval for payment of claims against the city should rest with the city controller, and that no action should be taken by the Common Council, except in the case of personal injury adjustments.

The Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research also believes that the payment of payroll items for services rendered should not require the approval of the Common Council, because the rate of compensation has already been established by that body. The computations appearing upon the several payrolls must be verified by the controller. Limitations as to compensations and employment are pre-

scribed by the Common Council, beyond which the controller cannot go. The Council would probably never discover discrepancies if they did exist, unless it audited the work of the controller, which is not considered advisable. Somewhere responsibility must rest, and it appears to be the function of the office of the city controller to audit claims for articles or services and to allow such for payment providing the items do not exceed the restrictions.

It is also believed that the value of the affidavit required upon all claims, accounts and bills against the city is negligible, because in a majority of cases the affidavit is made by a minor employee of the vendor. After adequate check is had by some responsible department for the purchase and delivery of all supplies, materials and equipment, and for contractual services, it is believed that the affadavit attached to claims and the approval of such claims by the legislative body is unnecessary. If an erroneous payment has been made it can be adjusted as easily without an affidavit as with one.

It is believed that such control over expenditures by a single department would be more effective than the method now employed, and that the reduction in time for the payment of claims would insure greater competition for the city's business, consequent lower prices on goods, and the elimination of the criticism of red tape, and would facilitate the taking of a discount for prompt cash payment.

Respectfully submitted,
Lent D. Upson,
Director.

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